THE NOAUG NEWS

8k

The EXPANDER--Super New OS For XL/XE's

By Roy D'Arcangelo

N.O.A.U.G. - **Synergy Concepts** has just released a new operating system for the XL/XE computers called **"The Expander"**. **The Expander** O.S. is advertised by **Synergy Concepts** as "The Power You Need Without Having To Be A Programmer To Get". As I wanted to know more about this system I wrote to them and the following is the information I received back.

The Expander was designed to support the 256K & 512K XE-compatible memory upgrades in the 600XL and 800XL computers, and also the 320K & 576K upgrades for the 130XE computers. The installation instructions provided give you step-by-step description on how to remove your existing O.S. and install **The Expander**. The only soldering that may be necessary will occur if your present operating system is soldered in, instead of being socketed. If you are using **ICD's MIO**, you will have to stack **The Expander** on your existing O.S. and switch between them separately as **The Expander** does not support the Parallel Bus. By stacking the chips together, and switching the select line, you will have both the original O.S. and **The Expander** O.S. at the users' option. **The Expander** supports many DOS versions, including *SpartaDos*.

An operational manual is included that steps you through examples of the many built-in features of the system. **The Expander** contains an Executive Program that gives the user access to over 35 user controllable conditions and functions. With your choice of specified console keys, you can power-up immediately into the Executive Program and choose from one of the nine RAMdrive options. RAMdrive configurations include six options for the 512K expansion systems, or three options for systems with the 256K upgrades. Once a RAMdrive is configured, you can go into E-DOS (the built-in MINI DOS) and format and load the RAMdrive from the physical disk drive. If you then

wish, you may change the RAMdrive to become drive #1 and boot it. When you are finished with the program, you can get back to the Executive Program through reset and reboot the drive in just four key strokes. You can also get into the Executive through the keyboard from programs like BASIC, DOS, most assemblers, and any other program that uses the O.S. to process keybaord data. In most cases, you can return right back where you left your running program and continue.

Here are a few uses of these RAMdrives:

1. Run your word processor dictionary at RAMdrive speed.
2. Run programs that perform several disk accesses.
3. Assemble programs to and from RAMdrives.
4. Run BASIC programs out of RAMdrive, or any other applications where a disk drive is required.
5. Run database programs in a RAMdrive and save data in another.

Other features of **The Expander** include a soft control screen color, reducing eye strain, and a soft control fast keyboard. You can cold start the system from the keyboard, or just clear memory. A simple keystroke with console key combinations supply programmers with LOAD, SAVE, and LIST in either BASIC or assembly language syntax. Also for the programmer, the documentation that comes with **The Expander** includes memory locations you can alter to configure the resident routines into any type of device you want. This O.S. can be customized to run up to four devices in EXPANDed memory.

In addition, there is a monumental software compatibility improvement with the 400/800 programs over the existing Operating System.

Synergy Concepts list **The Expander** with full documentation and support for $49.95 plus $2.00 shipping.

For any other information on the

REMarks

A Column of Opinion by the Editor of The NOAUG News

Goodbye

By Todd Petit

N.O.A.U.G. - This will be my last **REMarks** column. Well, maybe. This will be my last *regular* **REMarks** column. Definitely.

Why? Well, in case you haven't noticed, a few things have changed with this issue of the **NOAUG News**. Mainly, it is easier on the eyes. In response to the only complaint I have gotten on the new format, I have adjusted it so that the type is bigger, clearer, hopefully easier to read. There are now 17% fewer characters per page, spread out over 7% more of the page. This was accomplished by modifying my *Concepts* desktop publishing program to handle not only a 96 character line (as used in the earlier issues of the newsletter) but an 80 character line as well. Along with the new 80 column mode is a new printing mode that takes advantage of the **CRT II** graphics mode of my **Star SG-10** printer. Together these two enhancements provide the ability to publish a newsletter with larger, easier to read type.

Nothing is free, and these mods are no exception. Aside from the obvious loss of resolution in the graphic portions of the newsletter, we have also lost roughly one page of text space. And THAT is the reason for the demise of this column, and the **NOAUG Bulletin Board** box that regularly appeared on page 2. The information that used to go there is now on the last page of the newsletter (in a new format), bumping the monthly calendar. These format changes almost give us back all the lost text space from the new format.

And that is that. Enjoy the new **NOAUG News**, but remember one more thing: **REMarks** will be back if something important comes up and needs commenting on, if someone deserves a back pat, or, of course, if all my great contributors quit writing and I need something to fill the space. Be forewarned!■

SEC'S NEWS

By Denise Holzhauser

N.O.A.U.G. - Well it has been a few months since I wrote an article like this. So I thought I'd write a few lines about what's happening!
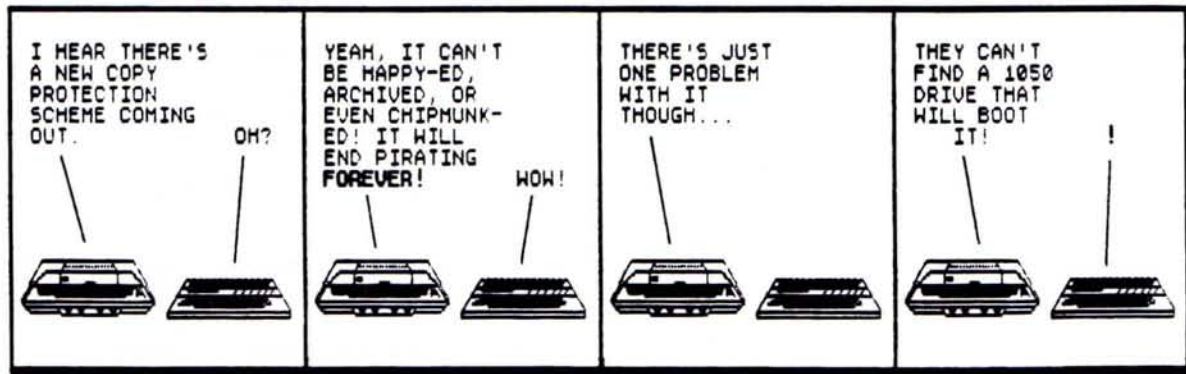
A few weeks ago I went to a "High Tech Nite" at a local computer store. While there I saw what other computers could do or not do in comparison to the Atari. I saw demos on the ST and talked to a sales representative from **Electronic Arts**. EA has some new software being released for both the eight and sixteen bit computers. The new releases for the eight bits are: **Bismark** (in Jan), **Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing** (in Dec) and **Saracen** (also in Dec). EA also has the following to be released for the ST: **Deluxe Print II** (in Jan), **Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing** (in Dec), **Scrabble** (in Dec), **StarFleet II** (in Dec) and **Gone Fishin'** (in Nov). While at the High Tech Nite I had the opportunity to see and play a tournament version of **Gone Fishin'**. And I must tell you that it is a great game. I will be buying a copy for my husband as soon as it is in the stores locally. If you like to fish then you will love this game as its just like it! Any one interested just ask me at the next meeting and I will explain the game a bit more.

We had an officers meeting and discussed many things, including whether or not to have an Atari fair *(the decision has been made, and it is no, Ed.)*. The board is also thinking about planning a club party and as soon as a decision is made we will let you know. We are trying to make the school meeting a demo meeting, so

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MT. FUJI *By Todd Petit*   The NOAUG News

I HEAR THERE'S A NEW COPY PROTECTION SCHEME COMING OUT. OH?	YEAH, IT CAN'T BE HAPPY-ED, ARCHIVED, OR EVEN CHIPMUNK-ED! IT WILL END PIRATING **FOREVER!** WOW!	THERE'S JUST ONE PROBLEM WITH IT THOUGH...	THEY CAN'T FIND A 1050 DRIVE THAT WILL BOOT IT! !

The *Navarone* ST Video Digitizer

By Buddy Freeman

N.O.A.U.G. - "Once upon a time..." ...Nah."...Nah.

As I sit here in front of my...forget it!!

So what's the big deal about writing an article for a club newsletter? Somehow I don't know the answer to that one, because it seems to come so naturally, and, so easily, to some other people. On the other hand, why doesn't it seem easy to me? Could it be that I don't care about the club or it's newsletter, or maybe I just don't have the time or the talent to do something of that nature. Then again maybe, just maybe, I am too lazy or apathetic concerning anything to do with writing. Arrrggghh! Enough of this psychoanalysis!

With that out of the way, let me get on with the subject of writing an article on the subject of the Atari ST.

About two months ago an ad appeared in **Antic** magazine. It was an offer by **Navarone Industries** to sell the ST **Video Digitizer**, not for the normal price of $139.00, but only $59.95. SHAZBOT! At that price I just had to have one. Upon receiving the unit I found it to be very compact, and, VERY easy to use. Like some other good software (**Print Shop** comes to mind), I did not even have to read the user's manual, which is not all that large anyway. I hooked up the unit to the ST, then connected my camcorder to it, turned everything on, and...MAGIC. Everything worked perfectly, and soon I had an image on my screen (unfortunately it was me). Not wanting to break the thing, I called one of my daughters into the room and had her pose for me. The results were good--not great--but good. The resulting image was too dark, although perfectly legible. It also seemed to me that the image was too tall in relation to it's width. OK, fool, read the instruction manual.

The first thing I spotted when I opened the manual was a single add-in page which told me that, as I read the instructions, I should ignore the part that tells how to set the width control on the side of the unit. This page went on to say that they (Navarone) had made changes in the circuitry, and the width control was replaced with a fixed resistor. They offered advice on using **Degas** or **Publishing Partner** to resize the image

to correct proportions. Well that explained the odd shape, but the dark image was my doing. I did not use enough light on my subject!

Yeah! I like the way this sucker works. It will save the image in either **Degas** or **Neochrome** format. Contrast and brightness are fully adjustable with a few keystrokes, or from the menu (yes, people, some ST programs DO use user friendly menus). Other features include the ability to do animation sequences, or choose from three grey scale levels (didn't I tell you that this was a black and white digitizer?). One other feature I particularly liked was the lack of copy protection on the software. This allows you to use the program from a hard drive, or if you are quite destructive, as I am, to make back-up copies of your disk. In fact, **Navarone** suggests you do so before using the disk.

In conclusion let me say that I am more than happy with this product and have used up quite a few disks saving images, and have added a little wear and tear to my printer as well.∎

(Editor's Note: Congratulations to NOAUG VP Buddy Freeman on submitting the first ST article since I took over the newsletter 5 months ago. Contrary to his opening paragraph, and popular belief, however, physical threats were NEVER used to get this article written. By the way, Buddy, I will be mailing you a map showing you where we buried your car as soon as we remember where that is.)
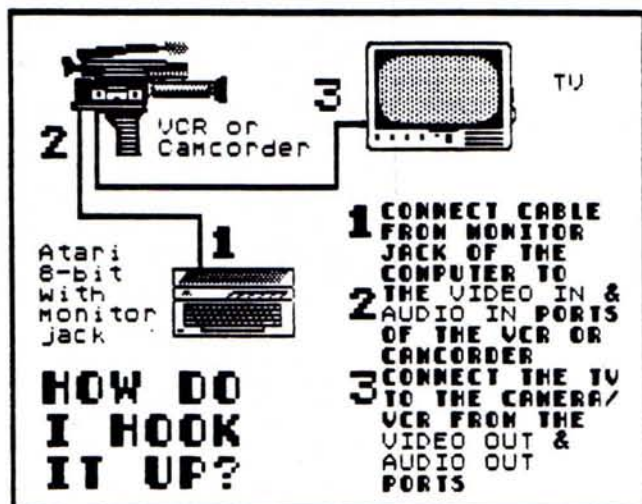
Video Titling With Your 8-bit Atari

By Todd Petit

N.O.A.U.G. - When my daughter was born we immediately began videotaping the various events in her life. It rapidly became apparent that some method of getting the date and significance of each segment into the video was needed. Since the camera I was using had no character generator or titler built into it, I was forced to come up with another solution. A shot of the calendar, after all, would only work once.

Of course I turned to my Atari. I found the answer in the monitor output jack that exists on all but the 400 and 600XL models. It was driving my Commodore 1702 monitor--which my VCR could also send signals to--so why couldn't it send my computer's picture to the camera itself? With a little bit of effort I had fancy **Micro-Illustrator** pictures and text going to the camera making some really impressive titles--and it was even easier than I thought.

My monitor cable has four plugs coming out of it, one audio and three video outputs. One video output was chroma, another luma (for use with composite monitors). I reasoned that the remaining video lead and the audio

HOW DO I HOOK IT UP?

Atari 8-bit with Monitor jack

VCR or Camcorder

TV

1 CONNECT CABLE FROM MONITOR JACK OF THE COMPUTER TO THE VIDEO IN & AUDIO IN PORTS OF THE VCR OR CAMCORDER

2 CONNECT THE TV TO THE CAMERA/VCR FROM THE VIDEO OUT & AUDIO OUT PORTS

lead should send the computer's picture to my VCR if they were connected to the VIDEO IN and AUDIO IN ports on the back of the recorder. I left the VIDEO OUT and AUDIO OUT connected as they were from my VCR to my TV and flipped on my Atari. The familiar white-on-blue READY prompt popped into view. Success! I could tape the computer's output just as if it were a TV show.

The titles I eventually created for my daughter's tape included scrolling text, a few **Print Shop** magic screens (exported via **Mod-8**), and a soundtrack that was generated by the **Music Construction Set** and fed in through my trusty 410 tape drive. I have used animation, the famous Atari rainbow, and redefined character sets to spice up my titles though none of that is really needed. A simple date may be all you require. But I bet once you get started--you won't be able to stop at a title that plain!

Dozens of other uses immediately come to mind. Record charts made with **B-Graph**, your high game scores, or maybe even work up a demo for your local computer club. This technique would be perfect for showing the highest level of those impossible games without having your audience fall asleep--just don't turn on the recorder for the first 321 levels! Or how about comparing several different word processors or DOS's? You wouldn't have to keep rebooting--all that can be done when the VCR is off, making your presentation smoother, faster, and more professional.

I hope that I have given you some idea of what can be done with your Atari and a VCR or camcorder. Try it--you'll like it!■

Do you have an unusual use that you put YOUR Atari to? An innovative way of putting your computer to work? Or maybe a computerized solution to an everyday problem? If so, share it with us! We'd like to learn!

By solving your problem, you may have come up with just the solution someone else has been searching for--so share!

Your Obligation To PUBLIC DOMAIN SOFTWARE

By Dave Porter

N.O.A.U.G. - No, this is not another article about piracy but rather a short article of praise for the best (in my opinion) programs to come around in the last two years...the fact that they are in the public domain is incredible.

First, as most of you know, typical software is either public domain, commercial, or privately written. Privately written software is usually written by the user for personal use. Sometimes it is written for the end user for the specific use of that person only. Software of this type is often written as part of the programmer's job, but sometimes is developed for the end user under contract or fee. Software of this type, with respect to ATARI users, is not very common but does exist. I know because I have a custom tailored payroll program written just for my small business.

Commercial software is, from the ATARI point of view, the most common type of software and can be of almost any type. Games (PacMan for example), utilities (DOS for example), or productivity software (AtariWriter for example). Most piracy infringes on software of this type.

A small, less often identified group of commercial software that just as often is subject to piracy, is that software typically published in magazines. Examples of this type of commercial software can be found in **Antic**, **Compute!**, or **Analog** magazines. Much publicity has been generated lately about **Antic** programs appearing on bulletin boards without the approval of **Antic**, and about **Antic's** unhappiness over this situation.

Now the Public Domain area is really the back bone of user groups all over the country, and for sure the back bone of most BBS systems in existence today. That is as it should be. However, we are just now getting to the point were we really accept the sub-division groups of software under the public domain. The traditional public domain software was no-strings attached software--sometimes with no credit to any particular author (often an alias is used). Most of this software is in the public domain for your free use (and duplication) with the stipulation that the original author's credit should remain intact. That is, you may use it, copy it, trade it, and give it to your friends just as long as the original author is given the credit for the program. The newer type of PD software is a catagory called "shareware". This is an innovative title that translates to something between full public domain

Printmaster Plus

for the
ATARI ST
Unison World, Inc.

$39.95

By Michael Aucoin

N.O.A.U.G. - Being a former 8-bit owner I was an avid fan of **Print Shop**. After buying my ST I missed **Print Shop**. Hence, when I heard about **Printmaster Plus** it was the first program I bought for my ST. I expected more from a program written for the ST and was happy to find it both user friendly and more powerful than my 8-bit software.

Printmaster Plus allows you to design signs, stationary, greeting cards, banners and calendars. Designing with **Printmaster** is easy because it is menu driven. With 122 pre-designed graphics, 10 font types and 11 borders to select from you can be very creative. **Printmaster** supports a large list of dot matrix printers and is GEM based.

The main menu of **Printmaster Plus** includes the functions: sign, stationary, banner, calendar, graphic editor, printer setup and exit to desktop. Sign, stationary and banner allows the user to create his own custom designs. The calendar routine will allow the user to create a weekly or monthly calendar with messages on the dates. The graphic editor includes the features: invert, horizontal and vertical flips, fill, circle, stamp and print shape.

Printmaster Plus allows you to mix two graphic designs (in different sizes if preferred) in the same application. In addition, more than one type font can be mixed (in different lines) on the same page. Text can be printed as solid, outlined, or in a 3-d effect. The text can also be printed in different sizes. Finally, **Printmaster** supports upper and lower case characters.

I find the printing speed faster than other graphic programs I have used. Before printing the design you have created, a preview is shown on the screen for last minute editing. In addition, the image can be inversed for use in creating iron-on tee shirt transfers. I have finally designed the long awaited for **NOAUG** club tee shirt!

The user's guide was very helpful, showing examples and hints. It did not, however, explain all the features of the graphics editor.

Printmaster Plus is supported with several graphic libraries including both copyrighted and public domain files.

On the negative side, the monthly calendar only lets you have six or seven letter words on three lines on each date.

In summation, **Printmaster Plus** is one of the most useful programs for the price. If you have a dot matrix graphic printer it is a must for your ST.■

Shanghai Your ST!

By Jim Woodward

The Pokey Press 4/87 (Reprint) - This game is based on Mah-Johngg, an ancient Chinese tile game and it isn't as easy as it looks. The folks at **Activision** have really put together a nice little package with a few minor faults.

The object is to find pairs of identical tiles and remove them from the pyramid (five high in the center) that they are stacked in. They are always in different places, thanks to the computer's ability to do random things. 144 tiles. Are you up to the challenge? There are 12 Dragon tiles, 16 Winds, 4 Seasons, 4 Flowers and 108 suits tiles, either Dots, Bams (bamboo), or Craks (characters or actors). They are laid out in a pyramid called a Dragon.

The object is to remove pairs, but that is just part of it. They may only be removed if they can be moved left or right, not up and down. And then, you must make sure that they are on a level which allows them to be moved. Then look closely, take your time, think moves ahead. What will happen later on if I move this tile?

The game allows for solitaire play against the computer, has teams competing against one another, in a tournament or you can challenge a person against the clock. Any game will get the adrenaline flowing. The game also makes good use of the GEM menu bars to restart games, give help, hints and remind you which tiles are which.

I'm not the biggest strategy game player around, but I love this one. It is a very big challenge. And very frustrating to find out that you can't move any more tiles, your strategy

A Piece of the Action!

By Karl Belsom

N.O.A.U.G. - When our illustrious newsletter editor set out to create his own desktop publishing program, he came to me for help in developing an algorithm for italicizing text on a graphics mode 8 screen (similar to the function available in **Typesetter**). After much poking and prodding and scratching of heads we came up with some **Action!** code we thought would do the job. The net result was a lot of **Action!** code that did something. It wasn't what we wanted...but it did something!

Actually, the entire problem with the code was that **Action!** did not support the rotating of bits. It supported the shifting of bits. Sound like the same thing? Not quite. What happens if your shift causes a bit to go past the byte boundary? You lose the bit! Hmmm...you have to rotate so you don't lose any of the information in the byte.

The following three listings show how I got around this dilemma. The first listing is the **Action!** source code for italicizing in graphics 8. The second is the BASIC equivalent. Listing 3 is the Assembly source listing for the ML subroutine used in listings 1 and 2. Assembly was necessary because it directly supports bit rotating. The Assembly shown uses the BASIC parameter passing protocol. The **Action!** version of the ML routine is different only in the way parameters are passed.

Using the subroutine is simple. Just pass it the address of the top left-hand corner of the line and the number of bytes to be italicized. If you really want to get fancy, the 8th byte in the **Action!** ML routine and the

13th byte in the BASIC ML routine is the number of scan lines to be italicized minus one (a graphics mode 0 size character uses 8 scan lines). Just change the 7 to the number of lines desired, up to a maximum of 255 (that's 63 more than the total number of lines on a graphics 8 screen)!■

(Editor's Note: ...*and it must work, just look at the title of this article and the name of its author!*)

LISTING 1 - *Action!*

```
PROC Italics = * (CARD Iadr,BYTE Ilen)

  [$85 $C4 $86 $C5 $84 $C2 $A9 $07
   $85 $C3 $18 $08 $A5 $C4 $85 $C0 $A5
   $C5 $85 $C1 $A6 $C3 $A0 $00 $28
   $B1 $C0 $6A $91 $C0 $08 $C8 $C4
   $C2 $D0 $F4 $18 $A5 $C0 $69 $28
   $85 $C0 $A5 $C1 $69 $00 $85 $C1
   $CA $D0 $E2 $C6 $C3 $D0 $D4 $28
   $60]

PROC Main()

CARD START
BYTE I,Null

    GRAPHICS(8)
    COLOR = 1
    FOR I = 8 TO 15
        DO
            PLOT(0,I)
            DRAWTO(159,I)
        OD
    Start = PEEK($58) + 40 * 8
    PRINT("        Press [RETURN] ==> ")
    INPUTS(NULL)
    Italics(Start,21)
    PRINTE("  ITALICS - NOAUG STYLE")
    PRINT("        Press [RETURN] ==>")

    INPUTS(NULL)

RETURN
```

(Listings 2 & 3 are on the next page.)

LISTING 2 - BASIC

```
10 FOR I=1536 TO 1597
20 READ ITALIC:POKE I,ITALIC
30 NEXT I
40 GRAPHICS 8:COLOR 1
50 FOR Y=0 TO 7
60 PLOT 0,Y:DRAWTO 159,Y
70 NEXT Y
80 START=PEEK(89)*256+PEEK(88):LENGTH=
21
90 X=USR(1536,START,LENGTH)
95 PRINT "       ITALICS - BELSOM ST
YLE"
100 FOR I=1 TO 1000:NEXT I:GOTO 40
1000 DATA 104,104,133,197,104,133,196,
104,104,133
1010 DATA 194,169,7,133,195,8,165,196,
133,192
1020 DATA 165,197,133,193,166,195,160,
0,40,177
1030 DATA 192,106,145,192,8,200,196,19
4,208,244
1040 DATA 24,165,192,105,40,133,192,16
5,193,105
1050 DATA 0,133,193,202,208,226,198,19
5,208,212
1060 DATA 40,96
```

LISTING 3 - ASSEMBLY

```
SRC       =    $C0
MAX       =    $C2
PASS      =    $C3
START     =    $C4
          .ORG $0600
          PLA             ;NUM OF ARGS.
          PLA             ;HYBYTE OF STADR
          STA  START+1    ;SAVE IT
          PLA             ;LOBYTE OF STADR
          STA  START      ;SAVE IT
          PLA             ;HYBYTE OF MAX
          PLA             ;LOBYTE OF MAX
          STA  MAX        ;SAVE IT.
          LDA  #7         ;INIT # OF LINES
          STA  PASS       ;TO SHIFT
          PHP
LOOPM     LDA  START      ;COPY THE LINE
          STA  SRC        ;PTR TO A WORKING
          LDA  START+1    ;LINE POINTER
          STA  SRC+1
          LDX  PASS       ;COUNT THE LINES.
LOOPX     LDY  #0         ;OFFSET ON LINE.
LOOPY     PLP             ;RECOVER STATUS
          LDA  (SRC),Y    ;GET THE BYTE.
          ROR  A          ;SHIFT RIGHT
          STA  (SRC),Y    ;PUT IT BACK.
          PHP             ;SAVE STATUS
          INY             ;ADD 1 TO OFFSET.
          CPY  MAX        ;FINISHED LINE?
          BNE  LOOPY      ;NO, LOOP BACK.
          CLC             ;YES, INCR THE
          LDA  SRC        ;WRKING LINE PTR
          ADC  #40        ;BY MAXIMUM LINE
          STA  SRC        ;LENGTH.
          LDA  SRC+1
          ADC  #0
          STA  SRC+1
          DEX             ;ALL LINES DONE?
          BNE  LOOPX      ;NO, LOOP BACK.
          DEC  PASS       ;YES, ALL DONE?
          BNE  LOOPM      ;NO LOOP BACK.
          PLP             ;RECOVER STATUS
          RTS             ;YES, THEN END
          .END
```

(Next month, Karl Belsom guests again, this time with an Action! timing PROC.)

221 BAKER STREET

By Dave Arlington

N.N.V.A.U.G. 7/87 (Reprint)

(With apologies to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle!)

It was a sweltering hot day in our little flat at 221B Baker Street. Holmes and I were just considering hailing a Hansom cab to the cooler confines of the Royal Botanic Gardens in Regent's Park when our landlady, Mrs. Hudson, announced that we had a visitor.

A gentleman of some distinction rushed into our flat. "Begging your pardon, Mr 'olmes, but I've something 'ere that I thought you would want to see right away!"

Holmes waved a hand and said to our guest, "Pray sit down my good man, and tell me all about the Atari 8-bit game from **DataSoft** that you have."

It would be quite a contest as to who held the more amazed look, our guest or myself. "Really, Holmes", I exclaimed, "surely this borders on some sort of psychic abilities on your part! He made no mention of any sort of thing!"

Holmes had a bemused look of contentment on his face as he started to explain. "Really nothing of the sort, I'm afraid. Pure reasoning is like a river, Watson. Just start at the source and the inexorable flow of logic will eventually carry you to your destination."

"Let me demonstrate. This article is appearing in an Atari computer publication, therefore I reasoned it had something to do with Atari computers. The gentleman's obviously superior breeding sets him apart as an 8-bit owner, and the callous on the inside of his right thumb is obviously from a joystick, not a mouse. So I ask myself, what good news could an 8-bit owner have for me that could not wait?

"Surely Atari could not have released any of their vaporware hardware products. Therefore it had to be software. I next query of myself, who is still releasing exciting new software for the Atari 8-bit machines? With titles like **Alternate Reality: The Dungeon, Mercenary, Theatre Europe, Video Title Shop** and more, I assumed obviously correctly that this was another new offering from **DataSoft**."

Having thoroughly cuckolded me again, we settled down to try this new piece of entertainment. Holmes booted up his trusty 130XE sitting next to

the momento from "The Adventure of Dropped Bit". *221B Baker Street* was the name of the software and it is based on a popular board game by John Hansen and Co. Each player took the part of different character. Holmes and I played ourselves respectively while our new found friend found himself as Inspector Lestrade and Mrs. Hudson filled in as Irene Adler. I thought I saw some slight discomfort on Holmes' part at her inclusion in the game but couldn't be sure.

After a disappointingly brief game which, of course, was won by Holmes, he asked me what my opinion of the game was.

"Well, Holmes, to be quite frank, it is almost an exact copy of the board game, including the simulated rolling of a die. The characters move to different locations in London acquiring clues to solve one of thirty cases that are included. The cases are very interesting and players are asked to discover different things each time, such as who did it, with what, and for what reason. Players can lock locations from other players with keys from the locksmith and unlock them with badges from Scotland Yard. When players think they have a solution, they return to 221B Baker Street where they are given a multiple choice quiz to determine if they have the right answers.

"While I do think it is an excellent adaptation of the board game, it does cost almost twice as much. I think the question is whether it is really worth twice the price to get a computerized version of the board game."

Holmes clucked and said, "As usual, Watson, you see but do not observe. The computerized version has many enhancements to the board game. Being able to play one of the main characters from your trifling stories, for instance. The animated graphics are very well done and at any time you can call up a map of the whole city. Even you must admit Watson, a slight chill in the spine when you heard the speech synthesis in my voice come over the monitor saying, 'Quick, Watson, the game is afoot!'

"But most interesting is the fact they've included some changes that would have even made the board game better. Players must now have a badge from Scotland Yard to enter 221B Baker Street at the end of the game. This makes their use a little more judicious in gameplay. They've added two secret passages that take you to random locations that might vastly help or hinder you. Best of all, clues can be either printed on the screen as they are or in one of twenty different secret codes. You know how I love cryptography, Watson, and now I can practice it in gameplay. This method of clue-giving is a vast improvement over both the board game and other computer mystery games that have been available for other computers before such as **Murder by the Dozen**."

"You mean...", I stammered.

"Yes, Watson, this is an excellent

entertainment value for anyone who enjoys these small matters of interest. I heartily recommend it. But now, Watson, I must relax. If you would be so good as to hand me my..."

"Violin?" I interrupted.

"Of course not, Watson! My *Star Raiders* cartridge!"■

Shanghai Your ST!

didn't work, so you just go to the GAME menu bar and start all over.

My only complaints are that the title screen should have had sound, to add to the effect. The sound is totally lacking for that matter, just the overdone bell sound. And the graphics could have been just a little better. But all in all, I recommend this program to everyone. Good luck, you'll need it.■

Public Domain

and commercial software. Software of this type is often available on public bulletin boards with the plea "if you use this software more than once to see if you like it please mail x number of dollars to the author. Unfortunately very few of us really face up to our obligation with this type of software. Another type of shareware is different still in that it really is regular public domain software with the stipulation that a commercial copywrite be retained, and that optional payment of gratuities are accepted. "Donations" if you please.

Now that the basic object lesson regarding what type of software exists is over, let me praise the true, no-strings-attached, public domain and say that two programs in particular (that I use almost everyday) fall under this heading. It should be no surprise here (and I don't think anyone will argue) that I think the finest, most widely used PD program to come out in the last two years is the *Express* series of modem programs by Keith Ledbetter. Not only are these telecommunication programs free but they are better than ANY of the commercial modem programs we have ever seen. That is not just my opinion but the opinion of the vast majority of ATARI users everywhere according to articles and newsletters from all over the country.

Another program in the PD that is another of the too-good-to-be-true catagory is the copy utility *Copymate* especially with the new version 4.3 that supports memory upgrades, the skew sector formats of *SpartaDOS*, and drives using the **US Doubler**. I will confess I liked the SpartaDOS high speed feature using the **US Doubler** but felt, up until *Copymate 4.3*, that copying the skew sector format was too much trouble and time. Now it is all I use.

To ease my conscience, and to show my appreciation for these two exceptional public domain programs, I will send each of the authors of these programs a small contribution--and I would encourage you (if you use these programs) to do the same. Who knows? They may be motivated to write something else just as good! ■

Sec's News
Continued from Page 2

anyone wishing to do a demo please inform an officer before the last Tuesday of the month so you can be scheduled. I am also going to see if I can get the guy from **EA** to come to one of our meetings.

Xmas will soon be upon us and people will be considering getting a computer for a loved one. Perhaps we will get a few more members with the passage of the holiday season. If you see someone new be nice to them as they are a potential member.

Get involved in **NOAUG**--its your club and it is only as good as the members make it. Write an article or do a demo. Till next time, HAPPY COMPUTING! ■

The Expander
Continued from Page 1

Expander you can contact **Synergy Concepts**, P.O.Box 421370, Sacramento, California 95841, or call (916) 332-9223. ■

Special thanks to Myron Petit for his help in the "new" look of this month's newsletter. Also, as many of you have probably already guessed, the new masthead of the newsletter is an adaptation of the fine ATASCII artwork on the NOAUG BBS provided to us by "The Disk Doctor". I would also like to welcome back to the pages of the NOAUG News former editor Michael Aucoin (you've been away too long, Michael). A final "thank you" goes to Karl Belsom for his continuing support and advice as well as for taking some of the load off of your editor by scripting his "A Piece of the Action" article both in this issue and in our next issue.

Speaking of our next issue, look forward to our annual index of all the articles that have appeared in these pages during the past twelve months. There have been a LOT--and many are valuable reference articles you'll want to be able to find.

And, finally, Merry Christmas to all from the officers and membership of the New Orleans Atari Users' Group!

Todd Petit, Ed.

New Graphic Adventure From MINDSCAPE
Flying High With Infiltrator
By Walter Williams

The Pokey Press 9/87 (Reprint) - Infiltrator is the newest release from Mindscape Software. Last year, Infiltrator was one of the biggest hits for the C-64, Apple, and IBM lines. Now, it is out for the 8-bit Atari, and I, for one, am glad.

Infiltrator is a simulation of a commando raid into enemy territory. You play Johnny "Jimbo-Baby" McGibbets, who among other things, is both a rock star and surgeon, as well as ace helicopter pilot. And Jimbo-baby doesn't zip around in any old helicopter, no sir. He has the most advanced helicopter in the world.

The objective of the game is to penetrate into enemy territory and complete one of three mission objectives. Little things like find the scientist who has been kidnapped and is being held in a very, very secure compound. The first phase is the helicopter flight simulation. It isn't the most realistic simulator, but it does keep you busy. After taking off from your home base you must determine the direction to the enemy base, then fly there, destroying all enemy aircraft before they destroy you. You can choose between guns or missiles when on the offense and on defense you have turbo-boost, chaff and flares.

If you are successful in getting through the enemy airspace, you must then safely land the helicopter, no easy task. After you land, you have twenty minutes to accomplish your mission. A small arsenal helps you out against lots of nasty guards. You then have to get out, get back to your helicopter, and then fight your way back to the home base. No big deal, right?

This is a very playable game that presents quite a challenge to the gamer. The graphics are much brighter than those on the other machines, though very similar. This game appears to have been programmed from the ground up, not a lame attempt at porting from the Commodore. If you like graphic adventure type games then this game is for you. It takes a little time to get into the game, but is not very difficult to learn.

Mindscape has recently released another good game for the 8-bits, **Trail Blazer**, and has another game scheduled, **Into The Eagle's Nest**. Support **Mindscape** and buy their products! ■

In this issue...

The Navarone ST Video Digitizer

The EXPANDER-- Super new OS for your 8-bit Atari

Videotape titling with your 8-bit

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